

The Glasgow Keelie

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GLASGOW GREEN'S NOT FOR SALE

No sale of any part of Glasgow Green was the clear message from the people of Glasgow at all four recent public meetings on the issue

Almost all of the 200+ people who went to the Bridgeton, Gorbals, Bath Street and Shettleston meetings voted against any private development on the Green.

The Council's in-house survey has been totally discredited as asking loaded questions of too narrow a sample. Yet messrs Lally, Crawford and co have said they will press ahead with their privatisation plans against the expressed wishes of the people of the city.

Why is this? There can only be one answer - **MONEY**

A 125 year lease of Flesher's Haugh to Rank Leisure PLC or the like would let them 'borrow' up to £30 million against that development to help bale them out of the huge debts now flooding in as 1990 nears its end.

FIASCO

Every week brings new revelations of the financial, political and human cost of the Year of Culture:-

*The Glasgow's Glasgow fiasco has cost the people of Glasgow over £4.6 million

*The directors of The Words and the Stones Ltd have pocketed over £240,000 in fees for the services.

*Another £3 million is to be spent on the Cathedral Square carbuncle.

*Strathclyde Region, which has spent £20 million getting in on the

Haw, Missus Gi'e uzz a Knighthood!



culture act is now going to cut £21 million off this year's services budget and £42 million off next year's.

*Michael Donnelly, assistant Curator at the People's Palace, has been sacked for telling the truth about the city's museum service and the betrayals by council leaders.

The pieces of the Culture City jigsaw are now fitting into place. Glasgow's many cultures were to be 'milked' and marketed to attract capital investment.

The price of the spending spree is the sale of one third of Glasgow Green. Those who speak out against this have been denounced and victimised. But more and more people can now see the political obscenity of squandering vast amounts of public money to attract more exploiters into Glasgow while the poor get poorer and jobs and services are cut.

We again call for the opening of Glasgow District Council's 1990 books to public scrutiny and an independent public inquiry into Glasgow's Glasgow.

Lally, Crawford, Spalding and the rest of their team must go. But much more is needed!

The Council's corporate power structure should be scrapped.

The whole private developer direction of Council policy must be reversed. **PUT PEOPLE FIRST NOT PROFITS!**

THE GREAT GLASGOW GREEN RIP-OFF

The proposed asset-stripping of one third of Glasgow Green (that is the reality of a 125 year lease) is one of the most scurrilous of all the dodgy deals currently being hatched in this city. That the deal has the support of Pat Lally and Danny Crawford is only to be expected, after all, they have been the principal authors of the big lie to the effect that the Flesher's Haugh is not now, nor has it ever been a part of Glasgow Green.

This is of course utter nonsense but the very fact that they and their licenced officials and various spokespersons for the developers are constantly repeating it, is clear evidence of collusion in a propaganda line which is an insult to the intelligence of every citizen of this city.

The reason behind the big lie is the need to find a loophole in the very specific wording of their own Manifesto which prohibits them from participating in any development on the Green which fails to respect its historic associations and usage.

These include the fundamental socialist principle of free access to all regardless of income, provision for football, bowling tennis, putting and general athletics. They also include the traditional use of the Haugh for circus, fairground, public meetings and concerts.

All three development schemes would end free access to the Flesher's Haugh part of Glasgow Green. The allegedly 'demand led' developments they propose would not build

upon or enhance these traditional uses of the Green but erase them overnight. Instead of upgraded football pitches we would be blighted by vast car parks which no amount of landscaping could conceal. That would mean the end of the "shows" on Glasgow Green, brought to us by the White's, Cadona's and Pindar's: names synonymous with the fairground, which received no support or sponsorship during 1990. That is why the Festivals Unit supported a spurious pastiche adjoining the People's Palace and hyped it as the real thing.

The four public 'consultation' meetings held on Sunday were not an exercise in democratic accountability but a reluctantly and poorly organised exercise in window dressing. They were granted not voluntarily but because Mr Lally's privatisation plans had already been rejected by the rank and file of the Labour Party, by his own councillors, by the council's own area management teams and even by his own architectural advisors.

All four meetings, in spite of being held at the same time in different parts of the town, were well attended and in each case the proposals of Lally and the Developers were overwhelmingly defeated. Questions on Richmond Park, the finding of the removal of sulphuric acid and other potentially toxic wastes from the site, went stubbornly unanswered. Similarly questions regarding the non-appearance of representatives of the Rank Organisation and their role in

abandoning and undermining the Waterside Heritage Project in Dn-dee were ignored. The connection of City-Grove to the Polly Peck organisation now in receivership, and it's current financial links with the Rank Organisation could not be explained.

Regardless of this near unanimous rejection of all three schemes Mr Lally and Mr Crawford have clearly no intention of bowing to the voice of Democracy. Their contempt for the outcome of the meetings was widely anticipated and is revealed in an article on page 4 of the current issue of The Bulletin. Written in advance under the title "Overwhelming Support", Messrs Lally and Crawford claim that the results of the dodgy and widely condemned market survey carried out by their own employees confers upon them a mandate to press ahead with the development.

It is now clear that the issue of Glasgow Green is central to the survival of the current Labour Administration. Every Councillor will be held to account for his or her response on this fundamental issue of local democracy. Being Pat Lally's pal will be no safeguard from the anger of the electorate in this blatant piece of political skulduggery is ruhher-stamped.

If you wish to register your opposition to the systematic erosion of Glasgow Green and other municipal parks and associated properties, join the picket of the City Chambers on Wednesday 21st November and lobby your own councillor.



● Lord Lally of Glasgow's Glasgow, CBI, IMF, Press Bar and Cross

GOING, GOING, GONE

Tolleross House Museum (Private Housing)
Kings Park Museum of Costume (Private Housing)
Springburn Wintergardens (Currently derelict and on open offer to any private developer at a nominal sum)
Kelvingrove Bandstand (Privatised without consultation)
Rouken Glen Gardens and Restaurant (privatised)
City Halls, Candleriggs (About to be put on the market)
The Dolphin Arts Centre (Threatened with closure and ripe for privatisation)

ADVERT

**WORKERS CITY
NIGHT
SUNDAY 16
DECEMBER
7.30PM
MOIR HALL
CHARING CROSS
GLASGOW
WITH
CLUTHA
ALEX FRACKLETON**

**JOHN
MacLean
March and Rally
10am
Sat 1st Dec
Gather Wishart St.
(behind Cathedral)
March to Glasgow
Green**

COURT PANTOMIME

Insanity Plea in Arches Rip Off

Mr Doug Clelland of Clelland Associates, Castlehaven Road, London, whose brainchild Glasgow's Glasgow is set to incur losses of more than six million pounds, now openly admits: "I am crazy".

Asked if Glasgow District Council were fully aware of the situation when they took him on, he replied: "They knew all about it."

Defending the fees of £240,000 paid to directors, including his own of £119,000, he declared: "OK I'm the fall guy. You can do what you want to me. I don't need Glasgow. I have been doing this sort of thing all over Europe. I am wanted in Germany."

It transpired that the accounts were filed reluctantly and only after a year of repeated warnings by the procurator-fiscal of police.

J. Reid was escorted to the toilet.

Four senior District Council officials are also implicated as hidden accounts to the tune of £700,000 come under scrutiny and may be the subject of a special inquiry. They are finance director Mr Bill English, planning director Mr James Rae, director of architecture Mr Christopher Purlow and director of museums Mr Julian Spalding. The mental condition of all these men is now thought to be precarious.

Others on the Glasgow's Glasgow gravy train include: Mr Carl MacDougall - £35,000. Mr John Bampton, design consultant of Sevenoaks, Kent - £78,000. Mr Mark Baines of Glasgow School of Art - £8,000.

Asked if he did not feel ashamed that poor people's money should be handed out so liberally to such a loathsome

gang, the leader of Glasgow District Council, Mr Pat Lally said: "These poor people are always whingeing".

It was revealed that Lally gave the OK for Saatchi & Saatchi to be paid £4m.

There was uproar when a frail old lady from the Workers City Group stood up and accused the Director of the Festivals Unit, Bob Palmer, and his deputy in the bunker, Neil Wallace, of being nothing but professional pickpockets and parasites - PR rats who for the past three years have treated the people of Glasgow with the utmost contempt, fleecing them of countless millions of pounds in a conspiracy hatched with Lally & Co, while the poor people in the ghettos are allowed to go on suffering in the neglect and dereliction that Lally's Labour Council has laid on them.

There was consternation as Clelland and Spalding made for the exits.

J. Reid was ejected from the toilet. Two men fainted.

The trial continues.

HOUSEY HOUSEY

Isn't it a sad final episode for the award winning Queen Elizabeth Square flats ... of which Sir Patrick Spens remarked when he opened them, 'they are like Spanish galleons sailing into the sunset'. He was obviously a man with a good sense of irony considering the fate of the Spanish Armada.

They are to be demolished by the Glasgow District Council for being too expensive to maintain. At least that is what we are led to believe. But that coming from the same mouths which dampened the chances of a quick end to the horrendous predicament people found themselves in among the awful conditions in the Hutchie 'E' flats, leaves us very suspicious indeed. Once empty will they sell them to a private developer to refurbish into luxury flats? Well that's what they are doing with all the impossible-to-let houses in the schemes. Anything for a quick buck to hide the cost of that other Council disaster ... Glasgow's Glasgow.

But, you know something, it's just possible that for once Pat Lally and his flock of sheep might be telling the truth. These flats must qualify as one of the ugliest, least amenable and most disagreeable developments in the ignoble and blusteringly petulant reign of the Labour controlled Council. Even so, the people of the Gorbals were willing to put up with such desolation in order that they be allowed to remain living in the commu-

nity in which they were raised. They probably thought that in time, things would have to get better. How dismayed they must have been to watch while they became surrounded by the new urban slums of the likes of the Hutchie 'E'. I'll bet you they would have swapped for a new deck then.

At least they had the comfort of knowing they avoided the industrial clearances out to those homelands for urban refugees like Easterhouse, Castlemilk and Drumchapel.

However, today, after a couple of decades of struggling to make the best of a real bad lot, succeeding to make homes for themselves within a genuine Gorbals community, they are now being pushed out of their houses. How many times must history repeat itself?

'Choice'

They won't be rehoused in the Gorbals as the only houses available are in the schemes and considering that all the good parts of the schemes have long term sitting tenants, what can they expect? I wouldn't like to have to make the choices which they will.

But do you know one of the most disgusting and cynical aspects of this forced evacuation, the District Council are keeping the people quiet by bribing them with payments of £1,500 for each household. Not all the households mind you, only those tenants who have

been there for at least five years qualify ... it would seem that they have more of a home to lose than the more recent tenants who, therefore, don't need to be bribed, they appear not to matter.

This bribe is officially called 'house-loss' payment, so those who have been resident there for less than five years are not considered to really have set up home yet, officially they have nothing to lose.

Well then you know what they say about someone who has nothing to lose. I hope they dig their heels in and refuse to move and you never know how they might be rewarded.

If the flats are demolished, it's almost certain that they will be replaced by an integrated housing development just like the one they are going to build on the site of the old Hutchie 'E' complex. This would consist of 90% private housing along with a mixture of special-needs houses for rent ... but none for Gorbals people.

If the people in Queen Elizabeth Square refuse to move, they'll put pressure on the council to shift its policy.

They made the Gorbals, they stayed in the Gorbals, they won't be paid-off in the Gorbals so think again Glasgow District Council before you flounder in yet another embarrassing mud-slick.

Spatchcock Spout

RAT CITY

Our underground BT mole tells us - there are rats in this city of ours, a plague of rats.

Not just the rats in the City Chambers, gnawing away at the soul of Glasgow, gnawing at the hearts and minds of the people.

Not just the rats in Strathclyde House, spending £20m proclaiming "there's culture all around Strathclyde" while they're fining students and cutting services.

No, these rats are even fatter than the rest, 'cos they live in Merchant City where the pickings are good for rats of all kinds like property developers, land agents and the rest.

There's a plague of real live rats - big grey furry one with long tails - in the sewers of the city centre.

It seems they keep eating through the telephone wires, even the armoured ones, under places like Bell Street and Buchanan Square. Not quite your new "Glasgow's Miles Better" image is it?

Is this a job for Smudge the cat?

Chantey Wrastler

Where will all the chancers and frauds go after Culture Year is over? They can't all get a job at the Sellafield Information Centre. But Doug Clelland of Glasgow's Glasgow infamy, has landed on his feet. He's off to Gateshead's Gateshead.

* * *

No one can accuse Councillor Danny Crawford of not being prepared to sacrifice. Following his recent marriage, he combined his world cruise honeymoon with council sponsored 'business' in New Zealand. And when the council urgently required someone to spend five days in Paris investigating 'water flumes' the wee man gallantly put himself forward, in the interests of the people of Glasgow.

Put the Bullet In

The most recent issue of that blustering arse-rag, The Bulletin, is devoted to the unveiling of the International Concert Hall. This poor substitute for houses and jobs, we are told, has now acquired "Royal" status (all uncover please).

The wind section of the Philanthropic Chamberpot Orchestra were in attendance at the opening ceremony. They made a big splash. The papers were full of it. There is no doubt that the sight of Doolally fawning at the feet of Princess Anne is a fitting image for Glasgow 1990.

It sums up the sell-outs and the sycophancy that have characterised the Year of the Pig-in-a-poke. The con artists of the Labour aristocracy have wheeled and dealt, not to mention wine and dined their way through the biggest fiasco since the Empire Exhibition of 1938. Never has so much public money been spent by so few on so little.

Little Red Rooster

If the Chamberpots of the Dis-traught Consul are getting it all their own way for the moment - though their days are numbered and their cards are marked - the same cannot be said for the Cancellors of Trashclyde Region.

The Leader of the Gang's arrogant effort to sequester students' grants ended in an ignominious about-turn. This was after we had heard the clown on TV cackling about "chickens coming home to roost." Now it looks as if his goose is cooked, his turkey's stuffed and his bum is out the windae. Nobody here but us chickens, Charlie!

SAVE GLASGOW GREEN

Join the People's Protest

Wednesday 21 November
Assemble 12.30pm
City Chambers
George Square

*This could be your
last chance*

The Fight To Save Glasgow Green

'Like an oil refinery'
The proposed Rank 'leisure'
development

It is interesting to note that up until the late 1950s West Thorn was quite a nice park with football pitches and an up to date cycling track with gradient bends, the only one of its kind in the West of Scotland.

It is now derelict with the cycling track dug up and concrete beams placed across it to prevent its use. This has a familiar ring about it. The same thing took place on Glasgow Green. How is it that the football pitches at the Green, the birth place of football in the West of Scotland, first home for all the first senior teams like Rangers, Celtic, Third Lanark, Clyde and many more, was never considered for real upgrading with modern type surfaces which have proved very popular elsewhere? When sports centres like Bellahouston were being built, why was the Green not considered? After all the first real gymnasts were the unemployed workers who, despite having to use their old working boots or stocking soles, were

very proficient on the equipment on the old outdoor gymnasium that now stands derelict. Nowadays a private company operates a very exclusive and expensive club on the fringes of the Green.

It is not well known that Glasgow did have, even if it was by accident, the first open air swimming pool, when they took the roof off the old Greenhead Baths to make way for an extension to Templeton's Carpet Factory. It remained off during the five years or so of the war and was used extensively by the people of the Calton even although they sometimes needed a bath after they had a swim, as, depending on the way the wind was blowing, Templeton's chimney often laid a film of soot on the surface of the water. Of course a real open air pool was planned for the Glasgow Green. Steel was delivered to the site adjacent to the present putting green, barricades were put in place and excavations were started but the only work that was ever done was the

red leading of the steel to preserve it until the war was finished. As the old wags used to say, it is a pity we don't have a real Red Leader. Unfortunately we only had Sir Patrick Dollan (are we about to have another Sir Pat?)

It is often said that the people get the leaders they deserve. Surely the people deserve better than the present elected representatives. In all the concern about the future of the Glasgow Green, not one of the elected councillors in the South or East End of the city have put pen to paper to justify their position. One is more likely to see them in the company of developers than joining the fight to save the Green. It is said that when one is looking for the diminutive Convenor of the Parks and Recreation Committee, Danny Crawford, you will find him in the middle of a group of property developers even if you can't see him. It is ironic that the Glasgow Green, the birthplace of the la-



bour movement, having survived hundreds of threats in its six hundred years of existence from Tory and Liberal administrations in the City Chambers, is now at last being leased to private developers for one hundred and twenty five years by a Labour Administration pledged to keep it in common hands. This is one record that will be remembered long after the year of culture is forgotten.

The writer of this article is indebted to the late John S. Clarke, M.P., Glasgow Corporation Councillor, Poet, Lion Tamer.

The late Hugh McDonald of the first Ramblers Association.

THE BATTLE OF HARVIE'S DYKE

The Fight for the right of
Way to Glasgow Green.
The Battle of Harvies Dyke
1823

It would be wrong to assume that the Battle of Harvies Dyke was an isolated incident led by a few hot heads. For many years the fight for reform was high on the political agenda: we had the Radical War of 1820 when thousands rioted, 85 were arrested and charged with High Treason, 23 were found guilty, three were executed, one of them James (Pearly) Wilson of Strathaven was hanged in the Glasgow Green facing the High Court. Most of the rest of them were transported to Botany Bay.

It was not the end of the struggle; a full scale riot took place on the Green when the King's birthday was being celebrated in 1821. A fireworks display was put on in the evening and some men and boys raided the ropeworks, set fire to tar barrels, rolled them in front of the high court and created a huge bonfire with fencing from the

Green.

The structure known as Harvies Dyke was built by Thomas Harvie, the owner of West Thorn Estate, a property one mile east of Dalmarnock Bridge, which he purchased in 1821. He built a wall down to the wateredge in order to block the public footpath on the river bank. It was too high to scale and too thick to break through. He also built a house for the guardians of the wall. As this path had been a right of way from time immemorial it aroused deep indignation with letters to the press and public demonstrations pointing out that for many people access to the Glasgow Green had been sealed off. In winter 1825 a crowd of weavers and workers from Bridgeton marched along the pathway from Dalmarnock Bridge armed with picks and crowbars and laid siege to the wall and levelled it to dust. They then proceeded to the end of West Thorn estate and burned down the large fencing. Some of them were fired on by persons in the guardian's house.



The crowd quickly dispersed when word reached them that a party of Dragoons had been dispatched to meet them. There was a fierce battle and the ring leaders were arrested and imprisoned. This was not the end of the case. Many of the citizens combined, took legal action and won their case. The public was vindicated. Harvie appealed to the House of Lords but they affirmed the verdict of the jury, finding Harvie liable to £100 costs of appeal. In this fight against the arrogance of a petty local tyrant every class of citizen participated. Among the leaders were James Duncan, a Glasgow bookseller, who began the agitation, George Rodger of Barrowfield Print Works, John Whitehead and the younger John Watson. Also in the forefront of the agitation was Alexander

(Sandy) Rodgers, the celebrated poet and radical.

After the loss of his case Harvie was compelled to arch the wall so that the citizens could pass. To commemorate the triumph of the people a bronze medal was struck (as illustrated). Obverse: Banks of the Clyde with a fountain over which the Herald of Justice waves a scroll bearing "Defend Your Rights". Beneath is Rapacity grasping his gains, with the other symbolical figure representing the water nymph and Justice herself. The reverse side bears names of the committee.

Join the
SAVE THE GREEN
CAMPAIGN



● Flesher's Haugh Events like the Big Day and 5th November showed its real potential as the People's Park

KANGAROO COURT

The appeal by Michael Donnelly against his unfair dismissal was the Kangaroo Court we predicted it would be.

Angela Mullane, his legal representative was continually harassed by belligerent interruptions from the Chairman Councillor McCarron, (Cardonald) while Councillor Mutter from Gorbals lived up to his name by doing just that throughout the proceedings, occasionally breaking into laughter as a disruption tactic.

Witnesses in the employ of the Council instead of being encouraged to attend were informed that "they did not have to testify". Of four councillors cited by the defence Pat Lally was unavailable, and only Phil O'Rourke, former Convenor of Arts and Culture was permitted to testify.

Asked about the attitude of ex-Director of Museums, Alastair Auld's attitude to the People's Palace, Mr O'Rourke volunteered the information that he (Mr Auld) had tried to get the Palace transferred to a private trust. When Councillor McDiarmid (Cowlands) helpfully suggested that this was perhaps in an effort to get it increased funding, O'Rourke merely responded,

"No. He just wanted shot of it."

Councillor McDiarmid then put it to Councillor O'Rourke that "a council like ours would not indulge in witch-hunting", to which O'Rourke replied, "I don't know about that, there's a lot of vendettas going on in this building, and projects getting knocked back."

Councillor O'Rourke was asked about the asset stripping of the late Tommy Chamber's bequest to the People's Palace by Alistair Auld to pay for the Ken Currie Murals. He agreed that this had happened and was done without the knowledge of the Curators.

When asked about his views on the service provided by Ms King and Mr Donnelly during his term as Convenor, he replied that in all his years as a councillor he had never come across more dedicated and hard working employees and he regarded their current situation as disgraceful.

After that it was a case of goodnight and thank you Councillor and the two remaining witnesses Messrs Mossan and Stevenson were banned from giving evidence. No reason was given but we all know why, and even if we had no proof Pat Lally's subsequent attempts to

victimise them into silence has provided the evidence.

The second session of the Appeal process, held at 10.10 on a Sunday morning, was a re-run of the first. Once again no advance commitment to hear Mr Donnelly's witnesses could be obtained and so Ms Mullane summed up on behalf of her Client by declaring their pro-

ceedings to be prejudicial and biased. When the guilty verdict was upheld, Councillor Mutter burst into a chorus of "I Did It My Way". No doubt you did Councillor, but you won't be so chirpy at the Industrial Tribunal and the people will still get their opportunity to do you the democratic way when re-selection comes around.



To Our Green

Glasgow has trees
places of wild
grass and water
rights of way
for
you and me.

Simple word park
but great word
place where city
child woman man
can
breathe fresh air.

Glasgow City Council
is attacking
our place of struggle

giving it away
killing our past.

Cant just sit
as grass and tree
gets ripped up
for the sake
of money and greed
Green belongs to us.

As in past
let us struggle
speak our voices
fight to retain
part of working
culture.

Bobby Christie

SICK CITY

by
Ollie Jay

TAKing cARE of Business

Secrecy and dirty deals behind closed doors are not the sole province of Glasgow District Council. Greater Glasgow Health Board, that other bastion of Glasgow life, have also perfected the arts of deception, secrecy and misinformation. This has become apparent during the past year as the Board produced a number of plans to reshape the Health Service in Glasgow. These plans go under the collective titles of "Strategic Reviews" or cutbacks by any other name. In one these many Strategy Reviews dealing with the future provision of services for the Elderly, the Board proposes a partnership with the Oldham based private nursing home company TAKARE. This deal will provide a base for further privatisation of the Health Service in Glasgow via the back door, if Michael Forsyth and his pet Larry the Lamb Peterken, GGHB General Manager have their way.

The review states that, "Takare will provide 300 long stay beds in purpose built homestyle accommodation. These beds will be located in the south of the city to replace unsatisfactory accommodation at Darnley Hospital and to remedy the shortfall in beds in the south-east at Rutherglen."

Elements of this statement from the Board merit closer examination; firstly what is meant by the quaint Americanese phrase "homestyle accommodation"? A report by a Forth Valley Health Board group, after visits to some Takare establishments in England may shed some light, as these quotes show:

HOMESTYLE ACCOMMODATION?

"Bathroom/toilet areas were rather remote from the main dayrooms and were lacking in privacy. There were no showers, this being Company policy and relatively few 'assisted' baths. Each 30 bedded wing contained 6 toilets and 4 bathrooms. Toilets were poorly designed and located with a lack of back support for users and were of a variety of heights without appropri-

The Scandal of Glasgow's Granny Farms

ate matched grab rails and aids."

"For each 30 bedded wing there was only one large dining/sitting area. In the older units this was not subdivided internally although some attempt had been made to provide offset alcoves in the newer units and to make use of small seating areas in parts of the circulation corridors. However there was an overall lack of privacy in the day areas."

"...there was a general impression of a lack of space with rooms serving multiple and often inappropriate purposes eg. pantry/servery doubling as a domestic services room and hairdressing facility. There was no accommodation in the homes specifically allocated for the use of therapists, doctors, chiropodists and an apparent lack of storage and interview facilities in each 30 bed unit."

"Carpet tiles present in the living area and corridor floors looked worn and in a poor condition for units of the age visited."

"Bedroom areas were uncarpeted in all units, floors being covered with non-slip vinyl type flooring. Rugs were present in some of the bedrooms but appeared to constitute a potential hazard. Wallpaper was present only on some of the dayrooms and entrance hall walls but could if provided go a considerable way to providing more homely surroundings."

"The overall impression gained by the visiting team was of standards somewhat below those now being targeted in Forth Valley long stay wards."

"...there was a strong smell of urine in several, but not all, of the units. The cause of this was not ascertained. It may have been due to inadequate nurse/patient ratios, the nursing care policies particularly in relating to the management of incontinent patients, to inadequately cleaned carpets/furnishings or to the high number of commodes in the units."

A strange notion of "Homes-

style Accommodation"! These cramped and basic surroundings and the inadequate communal toilet facilities recall the worst aspects of the old "Slumstyle Accommodation" in tenements. At the very least, private toilet and sitting areas could be provided, but what we have here is accommodation on the cheap with nursing staff being employed on terms and conditions that are worse than the NHS (No sick pay, night or weekend enhancements and fewer holidays).

In fact, the best type of care for the majority of the people being considered by the Board for transfer into these facilities is sheltered housing with community health care support. This costs more money, but surely working class people are entitled to all the comforts with which this rich state can provide them, after a lifetime of work.

UNSATISFACTORY ACCOMMODATION?

If NHS accommodation in Glasgow is unsatisfactory who is to blame? At a recent conference organised, amongst others, by BUPA Nursing, Mr Peterken commented on a visit he had made to an NHS hospital during which he observed bags of rubbish lying about, rusting hand-rails and staircases, chipped and flaking paint and rows of patients sitting watching TV.

"Is this care?" he asked, "I think the NHS should be ashamed of itself. In the NHS we are delivering second class care when we could have better under partnership."

This is a strange statement coming from the man who is in effect in charge of the NHS in Glasgow. If anyone should be ashamed it should surely be him, not the thousands of hard working men and women who keep our Health Service in Glasgow going against all odds.

In fairness to Mr Peterken, however, it must be pointed out that the Forth Valley team did recommend that their Board enter into further discussions with Takare. How did they come to this decision? Purely on the basis that Takare were cheap. But cheap today could prove costly tomorrow, as GGHB may discover.

If the directors of Takare or any other private health company find themselves not making a high enough profit they could increase their charges to the Health Board, or close down. Glasgow's NHS would then find themselves in a no-win situation, either having to pay up or potentially, having hundreds of homeless elderly people to accommodate.

It should be remembered that the only purpose of a private company is to make money, and it will put the interests of its shareholders first. The morality of entrusting it with the wellbeing of elderly and vulnerable members of our society is therefore highly questionable.

One final quote from the Social Services Department of Oldham, where Takare is based.

"Keeping their beds full and their cash flow healthy seems a major factor in respect of their admission policy."

Speetre Haunting Paisley

Get rich quick merchants got more than they bargained for when they bought the old Royal Alexandria Infirmary in Paisley to turn into a granny farm.

They've had to call in both a Roman Catholic priest and a Protestant minister to exorcise the building following repeated 'sightings' of 'The White Lady'.

The cost of feeding a patient for a full week at Stobhill Hospital is now set at £9.50; about the price of one small snack at the new Royal Concert Hall restaurant.

XMAS CARDS

Many of Glasgow's Hospital Laboratory staff could discover an extra gift in their xmas pay packet - a redundancy notice, if secret plans leaked from the Health Board are implemented. These plans reveal the Board's intention to cut the number of lab staff from its present total of 601 - already understaffed by 80 - to 486 by April 1991. As well as the loss of many people's livelihoods these cuts will also lead to the closure of many Emergency Labs, delays in urgent and non-urgent tests and other reductions in service. Glasgow's lab workers are looking forward to a crappy Christmas and a preposterous New Year.



④ mistle clappy go

